



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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April 13, 2010

TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **OLIVE CREST FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT REVIEW – A
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES PROVIDER**

We have completed a contract compliance review of Olive Crest Foster Family Agency (Olive Crest or Agency), a Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) provider.

Background

DCFS contracts with Olive Crest, a private non-profit community-based organization to recruit, train and certify foster parents for the supervision of children DCFS places in foster care. Once the Agency places a child, it is required to monitor the placement until the child is discharged from the program.

Olive Crest is required to hire qualified social workers to provide case management and act as a liaison between DCFS and foster parents. The Agency oversees a total of 68 certified foster homes in which 48 DCFS children were placed at the time of our review. Olive Crest is located in the Fourth and Fifth Districts.

DCFS pays Olive Crest a negotiated monthly rate, per child placement, established by the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) Foster Care Rates Bureau. Based on the child's age, Olive Crest receives between \$1,589 and \$1,865 per month, per child. Out of these funds, the Agency pays the foster parents between \$624 and \$790 per month, per child. DCFS paid Olive Crest approximately \$816,000 during Fiscal Year 2008-09.

Purpose/Methodology

The purpose of our review was to determine whether Olive Crest was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement and the County contract. We reviewed certified foster parent files, children's case files, personnel files and interviewed the Agency's staff. We also visited a number of certified foster homes and interviewed the children and the foster parents.

Results of Review

The foster parents indicated that the services they received from Olive Crest met their expectations. The foster child we interviewed indicated that he enjoyed living with his foster parents. The toddlers we observed appeared well cared for and healthy. In addition, the seven foster homes we visited were well maintained.

Olive Crest needs to ensure that foster parent certification files contain all the required information. The Agency also needs to ensure Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) and Termination Reports are prepared within the required timeframes and contain all the required information. Specifically:

- Three of the seven foster homes visited did not have a means of escape from the second story in case of an emergency.
- Two of the seven foster homes visited had swimming pools. However, the foster parents in the two homes did not have water safety certificates as required by CDSS Title 22 regulations. Subsequent to our review, one of the foster parents removed their above-ground pool and the other foster parent took the water safety certification class and is awaiting receipt of the water safety certificate from the Red Cross.
- One of the seven foster homes annual re-certification was 11 months past due. Subsequent to our review, the Agency conducted the re-certification.
- Seven of the 13 foster parent certification files reviewed did not contain documentation of current automobile insurance. In addition, one of the seven certification files did not contain documentation of a current driver's license. Subsequent to our review, the Agency provided updated copies of the insurance policies and driver's license.
- One of the 13 foster parent certification files reviewed did not contain a current CPR certificate. At the time of our review, the certificate was expired for four months. Subsequent to our review, the foster parent obtained a current CPR certificate.

- One of the 13 foster parent certification files reviewed did not contain the results of a pre-certification health examination as required. Subsequent to our review, the Agency provided documentation of the health examination. In addition, another foster parent's pre-certification health examination was conducted approximately five months late.
- Three of the seven NSPs reviewed were not prepared timely. The three NSPs were prepared an average of 25 days late. Our prior review also noted that Olive Crest did not always ensure that NSPs were prepared timely.
- Three of the seven NSPs reviewed did not indicate the reason the children were in placement as required.
- One of the seven NSPs reviewed did not contain goals for the child as required.
- Three of the seven NSPs reviewed did not contain documentation that the children's DCFS social workers were provided with monthly updates on the children's progress. Our prior review also noted that Olive Crest did not always ensure that DCFS social workers received monthly updates on the children's progress.
- Two of the three Termination Reports reviewed were not prepared timely. Both reports were prepared 41 days late.

The prior monitoring report contained five outstanding recommendations. Olive Crest fully implemented three of the recommendations and partially implemented one recommendation. As indicated earlier, the recommendations related to two findings in this report were also noted during the prior review.

The details of our review along with recommendations for corrective action are attached.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with Olive Crest on January 8, 2010. In their attached response, Olive Crest management indicates the actions the Agency has taken to implement the recommendations (Attachment I). We also notified DCFS of the results of our review. In their response (Attachment II), DCFS indicates they have tentatively scheduled a follow-up review of our recommendations for September 2010.

We thank Olive Crest for their cooperation and assistance during this review. Please call me if you have any questions or your staff may contact Don Chadwick at (213) 253-0301.

WLW:MMO:JET:DC:AA

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Chris Wing, Chair, Board of Directors, Olive Crest FFA
Tim Eby-McKenzie, Director of Foster/Adoption Care, Olive Crest FFA
Jean Chen, Community Care Licensing
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY PROGRAM
OLIVE CREST FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
FISCAL YEAR 2008-09**

BILLED SERVICES

Objective

Determine whether Olive Crest Foster Family Agency (Olive Crest or Agency) provided program services in accordance with their County contract and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Title 22 regulations.

Verification

We visited seven of the 68 Los Angeles County certified foster homes that Olive Crest billed the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in February and March 2009, and interviewed ten foster parents and one child placed in the seven homes. In addition, we observed six toddlers who were too young to interview. We also reviewed the case files for 13 foster parents and seven children and reviewed the Agency's monitoring activity. We performed our review during June and July 2009.

Results

The foster parents indicated that the services they received from Olive Crest met their expectations. The foster child we interviewed stated that he enjoyed living with his foster parents. In addition, the toddlers we observed appeared well cared for and healthy. The seven foster homes we visited were well maintained and in compliance with CDSS Title 22 regulations.

Olive Crest needs to ensure that foster parent certification files contain all the required information. The Agency also needs to ensure Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) and Termination Reports are prepared within the required timeframes and contain all the required information. We specifically noted the following:

Foster Home Visitation and Foster Parent Certification

- Three (43%) of the seven foster homes visited did not have a means of escape from the second story in case of an emergency.
- Two (29%) of the seven foster homes visited had swimming pools. However, the foster parents in the two homes did not have water safety certificates as required by CDSS Title 22 regulations. Subsequent to our review, one of the foster parents removed their above-ground pool and the other foster parent took the water safety certification class and is awaiting receipt of their water safety certificate from the Red Cross.

- One (14%) of the seven foster homes annual re-certification was 11 months past due. Subsequent to our review, the Agency conducted the re-certification.
- Seven (54%) of the 13 foster parent certification files reviewed did not contain documentation of current automobile insurance. In addition, one of the seven certification files did not contain documentation of a current driver's license. Subsequent to our review, the Agency provided updated copies of the insurance policies and driver's license.
- One (8%) of the 13 foster parent certification files reviewed did not contain a current CPR certificate. At the time of our review, the certificate was expired for four months. Subsequent to our review, the foster parent obtained a current CPR certificate.
- One (8%) of the 13 foster parent certification files reviewed did not contain the results of a pre-certification health examination as required. Subsequent to our review, the Agency provided documentation of the health examination. In addition, another foster parent's pre-certification health examination was conducted approximately five months late.

Needs and Services Plans and Termination reports

- Three (43%) of the seven NSPs reviewed were not prepared timely. The three NSPs were prepared an average of 25 days late. Our prior review also noted that Olive Crest did not always ensure that NSPs were prepared timely.
- Three (43%) of the seven NSPs reviewed did not indicate the reason the children were in placement as required.
- One (14%) of the seven NSPs reviewed did not contain goals for the child as required.
- Three (43%) of the seven NSPs reviewed did not contain documentation that the children's DCFS social workers were provided with monthly updates on the children's progress. Our prior review also noted that Olive Crest did not always ensure that DCFS social workers received monthly updates on the children's progress.
- Two (67%) of the three Termination Reports reviewed were not prepared timely. Both reports were prepared 41 days late.

Recommendations

Olive Crest management ensure:

1. Foster homes have an adequate means for residents to escape from the second story of the home in case of emergency.
2. Foster parents obtain water safety certificates in homes that have pools or other bodies of water.
3. Foster home annual re-certifications are conducted timely.
4. Foster parent certification files contain all the required information including documentation of current automobile insurance, driver's licenses and CPR certificates.
5. Foster parent's pre-certification health examinations are conducted timely.
6. NSPs are prepared timely.
7. NSPs contain all the required information including the reason the children are in placement and goals.
8. DCFS social workers are updated monthly on the childrens' progress.
9. Termination Reports are prepared timely.

CLIENT VERIFICATION**Objective**

Determine whether the program participants received the services that Olive Crest billed to DCFS.

Verification

We interviewed one child placed in seven Olive Crest certified foster homes and ten foster parents to confirm the services Olive Crest billed to DCFS. In addition, we observed six toddlers who were too young to interview.

Results

The foster child indicated that he enjoyed living with his foster parents and the toddlers all appeared well cared for and healthy. The foster parents indicated the services they

received from the Agency met their expectations. The foster parents also appreciated the Agency's excellent training and the help they received from the Agency's social workers.

Recommendation

None.

STAFFING/CASELOAD LEVELS**Objective**

Determine whether Olive Crest social workers' caseloads do not exceed 15 placements and whether the supervising social worker does not supervise more than six social workers, as required by the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

Verification

We interviewed Olive Crest's Administrator and reviewed caseload statistics and payroll records for the Agency's social workers and supervising social worker.

Results

Overall, Olive Crest's four social workers carried an average caseload of ten cases and the Agency's supervising social worker supervised four social workers and carried four cases.

Recommendation

None.

STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS**Objective**

Determine whether Olive Crest staff possess the education and work experience qualifications required by their County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. In addition, determine whether the Agency conducted hiring clearances prior to hiring their staff and provided ongoing training to staff.

Verification

We interviewed Olive Crest's Administrator and reviewed each staff's personnel file for documentation to confirm their education and work experience qualifications, hiring clearances and ongoing training.

Results

Olive Crest's Administrator, supervising social worker and social workers possessed the education and work experience required by the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. In addition, Olive Crest conducted hiring clearances and provided ongoing training for staff working on the County contract.

Recommendation

None.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP**Objective**

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the prior Auditor-Controller's monitoring review.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the Fiscal Year 2007-08 monitoring review were implemented. The report was issued on September 30, 2008.

Results

The prior monitoring report contained five outstanding recommendations. Olive Crest fully implemented three of the recommendations and partially implemented one recommendation. As indicated earlier, the recommendations related to two findings in this report were also noted during the prior review.

Recommendation

10. Olive Crest management fully implement the outstanding recommendations from the prior monitoring report.



Strong Families, Safe Kids

1.800.550.CHILD (2445)
www.olivecrest.org

To: Supervisor Don Knabe (Chair)
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: John Andersen, MS

Subject: Olive Crest Contract Review

It is a privilege for Olive Crest to serve the children and families of Los Angeles County through the provision of foster and adoptive services. We continue to diligently pursue the goals of Safety, Permanence, and Well-being for the children and youth we serve in partnership with the Department of Children and Family Services. Olive Crest has recently added staffing positions to ensure these goals are met in detail by restructuring systems where needed. It is our sincere intention to meet all contract requirements and fully support the collaborative efforts to meet the needs of Los Angeles County's dependent children.

Pursuant to your review, this letter is in response to the final program review results Olive Crest FFA received. Overall, Olive Crest is in general agreement with the findings and comments. The following summarizes our plans for corrective actions.

Recommendation #1

Foster homes have an adequate means of escape from the second story of the home in case of emergency.

Corrective Action Plan #1

Olive Crest upholds a common practice of review to ensure all foster homes provide adequate means of escape in the event of an emergency. Home/Facility checks have been regularly conducted by staff to increase levels of compliance with Title 22 and county contract requirements. Foster home emergency action plans are reviewed every six months by all members of the foster family. Olive Crest will now require that a "means of exiting", GLR 80023, will be established as a rope ladder or other fixed emergency exit to provide an adequate means of escape where needed in the event of an emergency associated with the second story of a home.

Recommendation #2

Foster parents obtain water safety certificates in homes that have pools or other bodies of water.

Corrective Action Plan #2

Two homes reviewed had bodies of water and were found not having water safety certificates in their files. One home was that of a family who had recently moved to a complex with a secure pool and the other home had a temporary wading pool in which swimming was not required for rescue. The temporary wading pool was removed for immediate compliance. It is Olive Crest's policy for families to have water safety certificates on file for homes in which bodies of water exist on the premises. Olive Crest will continue to diligently promote compliance by all foster parents who live in homes with pools or other bodies of water to be water safety certified. Foster parent file audits will be routinely conducted by Quality Assurance and administrative staff to be in full compliance with Title 22 and county contract requirements. Any certified family who is planning a move will be requested to have their certificate in place should there be a body of water on the premise.

Recommendation #3

Foster homes annual re-certifications are conducted timely.

Corrective Action Plan #3

Olive Crest works to verify that all foster homes are re-certified in a timely manner, consistent with Title 22 and county contract requirements. A new practice has been put in place where the foster family director will contact families who are approaching recertification and not in compliance. As noted in the program review summary, this particular re-certification was completed at the time of the review.

Recommendation #4

Foster parent certification files contain all the required information including current automobile insurance, driver's licenses and CPR certificates.

Corrective Action Plan #4

Foster parent file audits are routinely conducted by Quality Assurance and administrative staff to support full compliance with Title 22 and county contract requirements. As noted in the program review summary, this item was tended to by Olive Crest staff immediately subsequent to the time of the review. Necessary documentation was secured to complete files.

Recommendation #5

Foster parent's pre-certification health examinations are conducted timely.

Corrective Action Plan #5

At the time of certification the foster family files are reviewed for complete documentation. Olive Crest certification coordinators will work to verify that all pre-certification health examinations are conducted prior to certification. Quality Assurance and administrative staff will conduct routine file audits to help maintain full compliance with Title 22 and county contract requirements.

Recommendation #6

NSPs are prepared timely.

Corrective Action Plan #6

Olive Crest FFA staff is required to produce all NSPs within appropriate timeframes. FFA staff has been counseled regarding this matter, and continued noncompliance will result in disciplinary action with the staff. Quality Assurance and administrative staff will conduct regular chart reviews to support full compliance with Title 22 and county contract requirements. Olive Crest has recently hired a Supervising Case Manager who will work to ensure compliance in this area.

Recommendation #7

NSPs contain all the information required including the reason the children are in placement and goals for the children.

Corrective Action Plan #7

Olive Crest FFA staff are directed to produce all NSPs in a complete manner, including all required information and goals. FFA staff will be re-trained and instructed to complete NSPs in a thorough manner, and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Quality Assurance and administrative staff will conduct regular chart reviews to help meet compliance requirements for Title 22 regulations and county contract requirements. Program leaders will continue to attend county trainings and discussions regarding interpretations of how NSPs are to be completed.

Recommendation #8

DCFS social workers are updated monthly on the children's progress.

Corrective Action Plan #8

Olive Crest administration is confident that DCFS social workers are provided updates on a monthly basis, but some staff have failed to fully document such updates. All FFA staff have been counseled to fully document contacts with county social workers. Continued non-compliance with this expectation will result in disciplinary action, including verbal warnings, written counseling notices, and/or suspension. Quality Assurance and administrative staff will conduct regular chart reviews to promote compliance with Title 22 and county contract requirements.

Recommendation #9

Termination Reports are prepared timely.

Corrective Action Plan #9

Olive Crest FFA administration direct FFA staff to complete termination reports in a timely manner. Quality Assurance and administrative staff will conduct regular chart reviews to verify compliance with Title 22 and county contract requirements. Continued non-compliance with this expectation will result in disciplinary action, including verbal warnings, written counseling notices, and/or suspension.

Corrective Action Plans #1-9

Since the time of this review, Olive Crest FFA administration has posted additional supervisory staff to oversee staff and to help maintain compliance with all Title 22 and contract obligations. The Quality Management Division of Olive Crest has implemented a new program chart review process, whereby 25% of charts will be peer reviewed by supervisory personnel every quarter to promote a common practice in which all necessary components are present.

Recommendation #10

Olive Crest management fully implement the outstanding recommendations from the prior report.

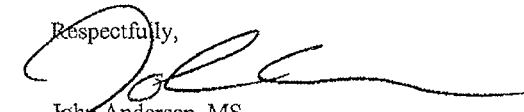
Corrective Action Plan #10

Please see corrective action plan for #6 and #8 for agencies plan to implement prior report recommendation.

Olive Crest FFA staff and administration appreciate the support and guidance of the DCFS reviewers, and affirm the agency's continued efforts to deliver the highest quality of care and services to the children and families referred by the County.

If any further information is needed, you may contact the Los Angeles Foster and Adoptions Director, John Andersen, at (818)563-2300, ext. 1301, or Regional Program Director, Steve Goclowski ext. 1603.

Respectfully,



John Andersen, MS
Los Angeles Foster and Adoptions Director



PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW
Director

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

March 23, 2010

TO: Aggie Alonso, Chief Accountant-Auditor
Countywide Contract Monitoring Division

FROM: Elizabeth A. Howard, Section Head *E. Howard*
Out of Home Care Management Division
Foster Family Agency/Group Home Performance Management

Board of Supervisors
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ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District
DON KNABE
Fourth District
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Fifth District

**DCFS RESPONSE TO THE AUDITOR CONTROLLER'S CONTRACT REVIEW OF
OLIVE CREST FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**

The Auditor Controller's Contract Review of Olive Crest Foster Family Agency was conducted in June/July 2009. The Out of Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) received the Auditor-Controller's March 9, 2010 final draft report of the contract compliance review on March 9, 2010. The DCFS monitor reviewed the report on March 10, 2010.

The A-C review found no egregious findings. The report, however, noted that one home did not have a means of escape from the second story in case of an emergency. The Agency's Corrective Action Plan (CAP) that was submitted to A-C on January 13, 2010, indicates that the Agency will ensure all foster homes to provide adequate means of escape in the event of an emergency. Several foster parents' files were missing required documentations including but not limited to the results of precertification health examination. The A-C report noted, subsequent to A-C review, the Agency provided the most of the missing documentations. Additionally, several NSP/Quarterly Reports and termination reports were found deficient. OHCMD provided NSP/Quarterly training to all providers on January 12, 2010.

The Auditor Controller approved Olive Crest FFA's Corrective Action Plan submitted to A-C on January 13, 2010. The Agency's CAP addresses the implementation of the A-C recommendations pertaining to physical plant deficiency and missing documentations in the foster parents' files, added staffing positions, restructuring internal monitoring system, re-training of the agency staff, a new program chart review process, closer supervision and disciplinary action including verbal warnings, written counseling notices and/or suspension in case of non-compliance to ensure full and ongoing compliance with Title 22 regulations and county contract requirement.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

**DCFS RESPONSE TO THE AUDITOR CONTROLLER'S CONTRACT REVIEW OF
OLIVE CREST FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY** **PAGE 2**

The Out of Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) will conduct a follow-up review based on the A-C's recommendations tentatively by September, 2010.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (626) 569-6804.

MG:EAH:EK

- c: Brian Mahan, CEO, Children & Families Well-Being Cluster
- Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
- Patricia Ploehn, Director, DCFS
- Lisa Parrish, Deputy Director, DCFS